The sixth Sunday of Easter – 10th May, 2026

WELCOME! It is great to have you with us.

You are very welcome to participate in our service as much as you are comfortable.

Everyone is welcome to come forward at the time of communion and receive the bread and the wine. There are no barriers to God's table in this place.

If you have children with you we encourage their participation in the service. If they need to ask questions of the priests they are very welcome to do so! They are also welcome to use the books and colouring facilities in the Children's Space.
Please join us for a "cuppa" and a chat after the service, in the hall.

The Sentence of the Day: 'Those who love me will keep my word,' Jesus promises, 'and my Father will love them, and we will come to them and make our home with them.' John 14.23

The Lord be with you.
And also with you.

Christ is risen. Alleluia!
He is risen indeed. Alleluia!

The Collect of the Day:

O God,
you have prepared for those who love you
joys beyond our understanding:
pour into our hearts such love for you,
that, loving you above all else,
we may obtain your promises
that exceed all we can desire;
through Jesus Christ our Lord,
who is alive and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

THE MINISTRY OF THE WORD

A reading from the Acts of the Apostles chapter 17 verse 22 to 31

Then Paul stood in front of the Areopagus and said, "Athenians, I see how extremely spiritual you are in every way. For as I went through the city and looked carefully at the objects of your worship, I found among them an altar with the inscription, 'To an unknown god.' What therefore you worship as unknown, this I proclaim to you. The God who made the world and everything in it, he who is Lord of heaven

and earth, does not live in shrines made by human hands, nor is he served by human hands, as though he needed anything, since he himself gives to all mortals life and breath and all things. From one ancestor he made all peoples to inhabit the whole earth, and he allotted the times of their existence and the boundaries of the places where they would live, so that they would search for God and perhaps fumble about for him and find him—though indeed he is not far from each one of us. For 'In him we live and move and have our being'; as even some of your own poets have said,
'For we, too, are his offspring.'

"Since we are God's offspring, we ought not to think that the deity is like gold or silver or stone, an image formed by the art and imagination of mortals. While God has overlooked the times of human ignorance, now he commands all people everywhere to repent, because he has fixed a day on which he will have the world judged in righteousness by a man whom he has appointed, and of this he has given assurance to all by raising him from the dead."

Psalm 66 – see screen for responses

A reading from Saint Peter's first letter chapter 3 verses 8 to 22

Finally, all of you, have unity of spirit, sympathy, love for one another, a tender heart, and a humble mind. Do not repay evil for evil or abuse for abuse, but, on the contrary, repay with a blessing. It is for this that you were called—that you might inherit a blessing.

For

"Those who desire to love life
and to see good days,
let them keep their tongues from evil
and their lips from speaking deceit;
let them turn away from evil and do good;
let them seek peace and pursue it.

For the eyes of the Lord are on the righteous,
and his ears are open to their prayer.
But the face of the Lord is against those who do evil."

Now who will harm you if you are eager to do what is good? But even if you do suffer for doing what is right, you are blessed. Do not fear what they fear, and do not be intimidated, but in your hearts sanctify Christ as Lord. Always be ready to make your defence to anyone who demands from you an accounting for the hope that is in you, yet do it with gentleness and respect. Maintain a good conscience so that, when you are maligned, those who abuse you for your good conduct in Christ may be put to shame. For it is better to suffer for doing good, if suffering should be God's will, than to suffer for doing evil. For Christ also suffered for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, in order to bring you to God. He was put to death in the flesh but made alive in the spirit, in which also he went and made a proclamation to the spirits in prison, who in former times did not obey, when God waited patiently in the days of Noah, during the building of the ark, in which a few, that is, eight lives, were saved through water. And baptism, which this prefigured, now saves you—not as a removal of dirt from the body but as an appeal to God for a good conscience, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, who has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, with angels, authorities, and powers made subject to him.

For the word of the Lord **thanks be to God**

The Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, according John, chapter 14 beginning at the fifteenth verse

Glory to you Lord Jesus Christ

"If you love me, you will keep my commandments. And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate, to be with you forever. This is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him because

he abides with you, and he will be in you.

"I will not leave you orphaned; I am coming to you. In a little while the world will no longer see me, but you will see me; because I live, you also will live. On that day you will know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you. They who have my commandments and keep them are those who love me, and those who love me will be loved by my Father, and I will love them and reveal myself to them."

For the Gospel of the Lord **praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ**

A reflection on some of our liturgical elements...

In our liturgy ritual and tradition are not empty formalities but living expressions of faith, memory, and reverence. The rhythms of worship connect us, in 2026, with centuries of Christian practice while, at the same time, grounding our spiritual life in the realities of modern day Australia. Through symbols such as candles, vestments, incense, and the sacrament of Holy Communion, our worship invites people into an encounter with the sacred that engages both the mind and the senses.

Candles hold a central symbolic place within Anglican worship. Their gentle light recalls Christ as 'the light of the world,' shining into human darkness and uncertainty. The lighting of altar candles just before the beginning of our worship creates a visible reminder of God's presence among us. The candle flame offers a quiet and contemplative symbol: a focused light that draws attention inward toward prayer and reflection.

During seasons such as Easter, the Paschal candle, positioned next to our font, becomes especially significant, representing the risen Christ whose victory over death continues to guide the Church. The act of lighting candles also reflects human longing for hope, especially in moments of grief, remembrance, or intercession.

Vestments (the ministers' robes) similarly carry theological meaning beyond decoration or ceremony. The robes worn by the people in the sanctuary remind worshippers that ministry is not centred on personal identity or status but on serving Christ and the Church.

The white alb is symbolic of our shared baptism into the body of Christ, the different colours mark the changing seasons of the liturgical year — purple for self reflection in Advent and Lent, white for celebration at Easter and Christmas, green for growth during Ordinary Time, and red for the fire of the Spirit or the witness of martyrs. These visual changes help worshippers enter more deeply into the story of the church throughout the centuries. Vestments also express continuity with the wider Anglican Communion and the historical Church, linking local worship with a global and ancient tradition.

The use of incense introduces another sensory dimension to worship. The rising smoke symbolises prayers ascending to God, echoing biblical imagery from the Psalms, Isaiah, and Revelation. Incense creates an atmosphere that feels distinct from ordinary life, reminding worshippers that liturgy is sacred time set apart. Its fragrance lingers in the church long after the service ends, hopefully!) like the memory of worship itself. While we tend to use incense sparingly, its scent and presence encourages reverence, mystery, and awe. It speaks to the Anglican understanding that worship should involve the whole person — body, senses, emotions, and spirit.

At the centre of Anglican worship stands the sacrament of Holy Communion, also known as the Eucharist (which is the Greek word for Thanksgiving). Communion is more than a symbolic meal; it is a participation in the life, death, and resurrection of Christ. Gathering around the altar, we remember Jesus' self-giving love and receive spiritual nourishment through bread and wine.

The Eucharist embodies both intimacy and community: individuals come forward personally, yet all receive together as one body.

Communion also reflects values of hospitality, reconciliation, and shared belonging. It reminds us that faith is not lived in isolation but within a community shaped by grace, and is therefore to be offered freely to anyone who comes.

Together, these rituals and traditions reveal our worship as deeply sacramental. Ordinary elements like light, fabric, fragrance, bread, and wine, become signs of divine presence. Through them, the Church proclaims that God continues to meet people in tangible and transformative ways.

Mel

Parish Prayers

People Who Have Asked For Our Prayers - Sharon, Matthew, Olivia, Terence, Susan, Katlin, Jessica, Bev, Shirley, and Chris.

Parish Diary

Holy Trinity Patronal Festival

Bishop Clarence has made a special request of us for the patronal festival this year, which falls on Trinity Sunday, 31st of May.
He has invited us to come to the Cathedral, which is also named Holy Trinity, so we can have a shared service of celebration together.
The service will be at 10am on 31st of May.
Please do come along and offer a lift to someone who may need it, if you're able.

News from Parish Council

The role of parish nominators is to work with the Bishop and Archdeacon during a time of interregnum (when the parish doesn't have a priest in place). At our Annual Meeting we did not receive enough nominations to fill the positions. There is no vacancy planned in the foreseeable future, but we need to ensure we have representation from the parish in the event that a vacancy occurs.

Training for servers, sacristans, and intercessors
Is God calling you to serve during the liturgy?
We will have a training day on Saturday 16th May at 3pm for anyone who is curious about joining the liturgical team.
We will learn about setting the altar, serving at the altar, and how to lead intercessions. Please let Rev Mel know if you're interested.

Winter Night Shelter
Thanks to the three people who have volunteered to be venue co-ordinators for the winter shelter.
The shelter will open in the courthouse on 1st of June and we will host every Sunday, Monday, and Tuesday throughout winter. The other nights will be hosted by the Baptist, Presbyterian, and Salvation Army churches. Please pray for the volunteers and guests as we seek to build community and care for those who are vulnerable.

Cafe Ministry
Everyone is welcome to join our coffee chat group at The Merchant on Tuesday mornings at 10am.

Op Shop News
Our Op Shop are seeking more volunteers to help out on a casual or regular basis. There are HEAPS of different roles you can volunteer for so please see Gwen if you have a bit of time to help out.

Bereavement Group
The bereavement group meets on the 3rd Wednesday of the month at 2pm in the hall at St Aidan's Swanpool. All are welcome.

Next Week's Liturgy: Easter six

Readings Acts 17.22-31	Psalm 66.7-19
1 Peter 3.8-22	John 14.15-21

Next Week's Roster

Usher: Jennifer	Reader: Molly
Intercessor: Rev Mel	Counters: Susan and Tracy